

# Ceremony celebrates 412th birthday of VNG

Leaders from the office of Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and members of the Virginia National Guard cut a cake to celebrate the 412th birthday of the VNG and Jamestown May 14, 2019, at the Sergeant Bob Slaughter Headquarters at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia. The VNG traces the traditions of citizen service to the founding of Jamestown when Capt. John Smith organized the colonists for defense, and since May 14, 1607, there has not been a day without a military presence in Virginia to defend freedom at home and overseas.

“On behalf of the Governor, we want to recognize 412 years of excellence,” said Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Carlos Hopkins. “Thanks to everyone for what you do to serve our commonwealth and nation each and every day.”

Hopkins presented a proclamation from Governor Ralph Northam recognizing the VNG’s birthday to Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia.

Williams put May 14 in a different historical context as he shared how in 1944, VNG Soldiers were conducting final preparations to launch the D-Day invasion on June 6.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/14/13098/>



Senior leaders and VNG Soldiers and Airmen cut a cake to celebrate the 412th birthday of the Virginia National Guard and Jamestown May 14, 2019, at the Sergeant Bob Slaughter Headquarters at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia.

## Virginia National Guard News Headlines

### Virginia National Guard employers recognized with ESGR awards

Virginia Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense program, awarded the Pro Patria Awards, Extraordinary Employer Support Award, Above and Beyond Awards, and Spouse Award during the 2019 Annual Employer Awards Banquet, May 4, 2019 in Norfolk, Virginia.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/08/13106/>

### Lord promoted to brigadier general, moves into new role

Col. Toni M. Lord was promoted to brigadier general May 7, 2019, at the Virginia National Guard Sergeant Bob Slaughter Headquarters at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/14/13081/>

### VNG honors military spouses for Military Spouse Appreciation Day

National Guard military spouses are honored and appreciated throughout the year, but they receive a special recognition on National Military Spouse Appreciation Day the Friday before Mother’s Day.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/09/13079/>

### WOCS welcomes new commander, recognizes new warrants

The Virginia National Guard’s Warrant Officer Candidate School welcomed a new commander and recognized the latest graduates of the program in back-to-back ceremonies held May 4, 2019, at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/15/13090/>

## Join the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Air National Guard or the Virginia Defense Force

For information about joining the Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia Air National Guard or Virginia Defense Force, visit the appropriate link below:

### Va. Army National Guard

<http://nationalguard.com/va>

### Va. Air National Guard

<https://www.192fw.ang.af.mil/join>

### Va. Defense Force

<http://vdf.virginia.gov/joinvdf/>

# VDF supports law enforcement at Apple Blossom Festival

Members of the Virginia Defense Force operated traffic control points and provided mission command support May 3-5, 2019, at the 92nd Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester, Virginia. Members of the all-volunteer VDF from units across the state assisted local law enforcement in keeping traffic moving and operated TCPs during a variety of events. The VDF also took advantage of the mission to train on multiple communication systems and rehearse administrative, mission command and logistics procedures they would use if they were called to state active duty to augment the Virginia National Guard.

"Thank you for your willingness to serve our community during the events this weekend," said the Honorable Terry H. Whittle, clerk of the Winchester Circuit Court, before he swore in a group of VDF troops as special deputies. "Every year I have been here, all I have heard has been praise about the work you do. Without your participation, without your willingness to serve this community, this event doesn't go on. You play a major role, and on behalf of the citizens of Winchester and Frederick County thank you for that service."

He also said that he knew the VDF would conduct themselves in the professional manner they always do, even if there was rain during the weekend.

"In today's environment, it is more important than ever that we are out helping law enforcement keep people safe as they attend the events this weekend," said Lt. Col. (Va.) Thomas Cooke, commander of the VDF's 2nd Regiment and officer in charge of ABF support. "In addition to making sure that traffic flows correctly, we are also the eyes and ears of the police, fire and rescue."

The Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival is a series of more than 30 events held in Winchester and Frederick County including band competitions, dances, parades and a 10K Race. Crowds in excess of 250,000 attend the festival each year.

The VDF is authorized by Title 44 of the Code of Virginia as the all-volunteer reserve of the Virginia National Guard, and it serves as a force multiplier integrated into all Guard domestic operations. The VDF reports to the Adjutant General of Virginia as part of the Virginia Department of Military Affairs along with the Virginia Army National Guard and Virginia Air National Guard. Members of the VDF volunteer their time for training and are only paid when called to state active duty by an authorization from the Governor of Virginia.

The VDF recently celebrated its 35th anniversary, and Del. Debra Rodman of Virginia's 73rd House District presented General Assembly Joint Resolution No. 864 celebrating the 35th anniversary of the VDF to Brig. Gen. (Va.) Justin P. Carlitti, Sr., commander of the Virginia Defense Force, May 4, 2019, in Richmond, Virginia.

VDF history traces back to the Virginia Volunteers in World War I and the Virginia Protective Force and Virginia State Guard in World War II. The Virginia State Guard was formally reestablished on April 18, 1984, and is recognized as the birthday



**A member of the Virginia Defense Force keeps traffic moving May 3, 2019, at the 92nd Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester, Virginia.**

of the modern VDF. The Virginia General Assembly amended the Code of Virginia March 1, 1986, to change the name of the Virginia State Guard to the Virginia Defense Force.

In addition to community support events like ABF, members of the VDF conduct regular training to hone the skills that could help their fellow citizens in times of need.

Nearly 200 VDF personnel participated in security training focused on a vehicle inspection and traffic control, and communications training featured classroom instruction and hands-on high frequency radio employment for voice and data messaging during a multi-day training weekend at Fort Pickett in March.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/05/13101/>

## MORE ON THE WEB

### NCO takes Boston Marathon experience to VNG running team

<https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/05/02/13070/>

### 149th Fighter Squadron welcomes new commander

<https://go.usa.gov/xmp8s>

### Photos: DMA employees recognized at Fort Pickett

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157707022659981>

### Photos: JFHQ Soldiers recognized for extending enlistments

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157708509762034>

### Photos: AG visits 2-224th, commends unit for readiness

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157691351954133>



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